

### REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

By this Preliminary Amendment, the cross-reference to related applications has been inserted on page 1, the specification has been amended to improve its form and to add section headings, claims 1-16 have been canceled, claims 17-20 have been added and the originally-filed drawings have been replaced with new FIGS. 1-6. An Abstract has been provided. Claims 17-20 substantially correspond with claims 29-32 of the parent application which were withdrawn from consideration by the Examiner as directed to a non-elected invention. Unlike claim 29 in the parent case, however, claim 17 does not refer to another claim.

The new drawings include corrected FIGS. 3-5 which the Examiner had objected to in the parent case as using more than one reference character to refer to the tube mat "1, 7", the tubes "2, 8" and the tube closure "3, 9 and 10". As in the parent case, Applicants have redesignated the tube mats "7" in FIGS. 3 and 4 with the reference numeral --1--, the tubes "8" in FIGS. 3, 4 and 5 with the reference numeral --2--, and the tube closures "9, 10" in FIGS. 3 and 5 with the reference numeral --3-- and have made corresponding changes to the specification to reflect those numbers.

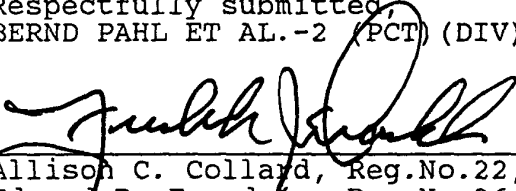
The Abstract corresponds with the Abstract submitted in the parent case in response to the Examiner's objection in the parent

case to the original Abstract as failing to conform with U.S. practice.

It is respectfully requested that the claims be allowed and that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,  
BERND PAHL ET AL.-2 (PCT) (DIV)

COLLARD & ROE, P.C.  
1077 Northern Boulevard  
Roslyn, New York 11576  
(516) 365-9802  
FJD:jc

  
Allison C. Collard, Reg.No.22,532  
Edward R. Freedman, Reg.No.26,048  
Frederick J. Dorchak, Reg.No.29,298  
Attorneys for Applicant

**EXPRESS MAIL NO.**  
**Date of Deposit**

**EL 987 023 925 US**  
**August 20, 2003**

I hereby certify that this paper or fee is being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service under 37 C.F.R. § 1.10, on the date indicated above, and is addressed to the Commissioner of Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

  
Maria Guastella